



CAMA CONFERENCE FOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Empowering Executive Assistants for Tomorrow

October 5-7, 2025 | Ottawa, Ontario

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR CONFERENCE PARTNERS

The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators proudly recognizes our valued Conference Partners.

We are grateful to have [Government Frameworks](#) return as our Gold Partner. Their continued commitment to supporting Executive Assistants and advancing the local government profession is invaluable.

We extend our appreciation to all our partners who make this event possible. Together, we are fostering excellence, innovation, and leadership within the Executive Assistant community from coast to coast.



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Strengthen Your Leadership Team: Send Your EA to CAMA's Conference for Executive Assistants

Attending the CAMA Conference for Executive Assistants in Local Government was an invaluable experience that exceeded my expectations. The sessions were incredibly insightful, covering diverse topics from advanced project management techniques to professional growth strategies. Networking with fellow EAs allowed me to share best practices and gain fresh perspectives on the challenges we face in our roles. The speakers were not only knowledgeable but also inspiring, reminding us of the vital role we play in our organizations. Overall, I left feeling motivated and equipped with new tools to enhance my skills as an Executive Assistant. I highly recommend the CAMA Conference for Executive Assistants in Local Government to anyone in the field!

BETH READMAN

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/SPECIAL PROJECTS LEAD, COUNTY OF LENNOX-ADDINGTON, ON

Participating in CAMA Conferences has had an amazing impact on myself as a CAO and on our Senior Leadership Team. The quality of the sessions, the networking and the inspiring speakers raises the level of excellence in our organization. I was excited to extend this similar learning opportunity to my Executive Assistant. As CAOs we rely so heavily on our EAs. Providing them with learning opportunities tailored to our needs as CAOs is such a wise investment. It equips them with new skills and resources, and it recognizes the value of their professional skill set.

BRENDA ORCHARD

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, COUNTY OF LENNOX-ADDINGTON, ON

Make this investment in your EA—and your organization—by registering them for the next CAMA Conference for Executive Assistants.



BETH READMAN

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/SPECIAL PROJECTS
LEAD, COUNTY OF LENNOX-ADDINGTON, ON



BRENDA ORCHARD

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, COUNTY OF
LENNOX-ADDINGTON, ON



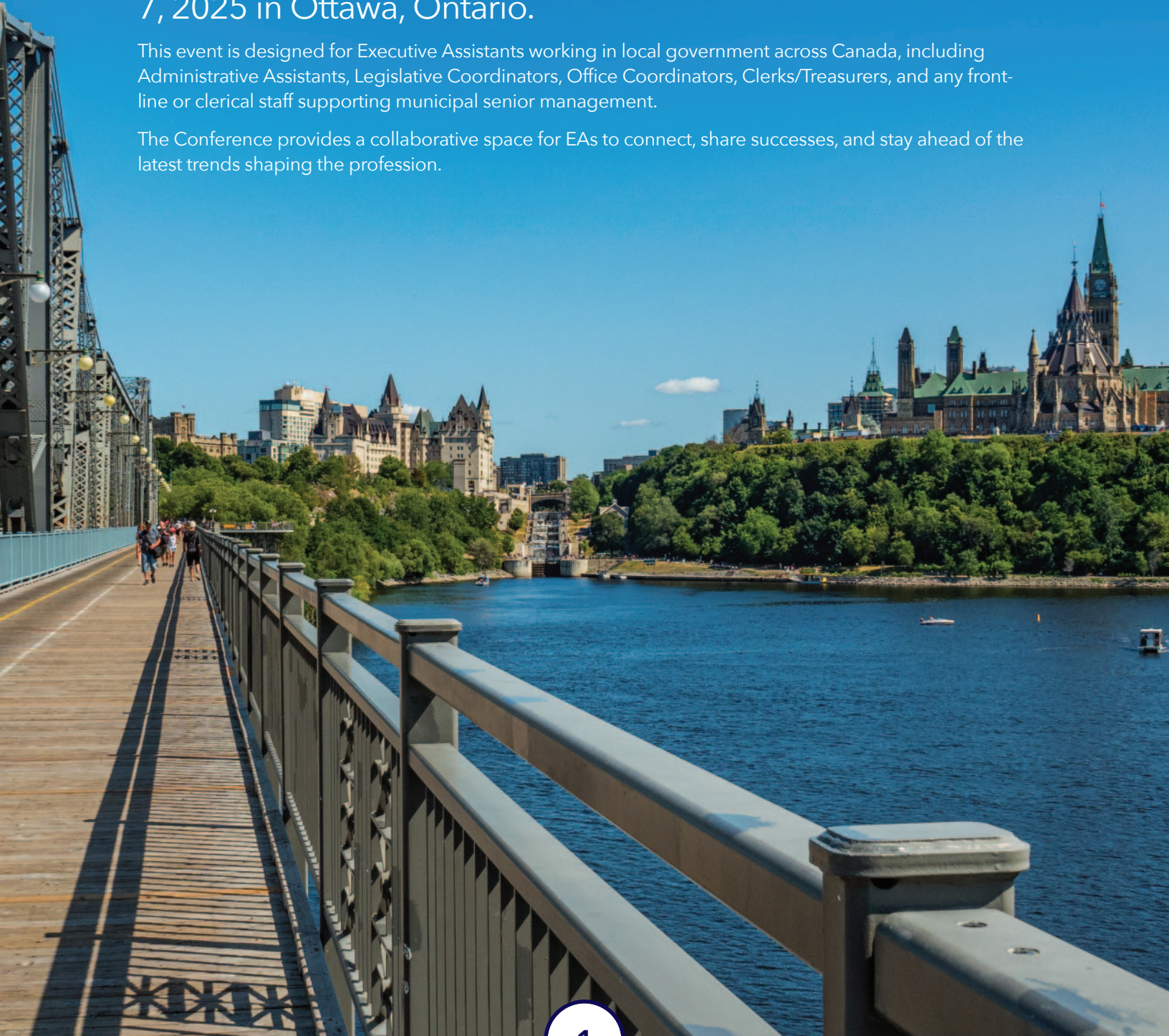


GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

CAMA's 2nd Annual National Conference for Executive Assistants in Local Government will be held from October 5-7, 2025 in Ottawa, Ontario.

This event is designed for Executive Assistants working in local government across Canada, including Administrative Assistants, Legislative Coordinators, Office Coordinators, Clerks/Treasurers, and any front-line or clerical staff supporting municipal senior management.

The Conference provides a collaborative space for EAs to connect, share successes, and stay ahead of the latest trends shaping the profession.



About the Conference

The venue is the Delta by Marriott Ottawa City Centre Hotel, located just a 20-minute drive from Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport.

Registration opens on Sunday, October 5, 2025, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and again from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This year's program includes two Historical Walking Tours of Ottawa—one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

The event officially kicks off Sunday evening with the Opening Ceremonies at 5:15 p.m., followed by Keynote Speaker Sarah McVanel, and wraps up with the Welcome Reception at the Delta Hotel.

On Monday, October 6, 2025, you will experience a full day of professional development sessions, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities, followed by our "Red & White Night – A Toast to Canada" at the Lowertown Brewery in the ByWard Market. The Conference will conclude on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, with additional sessions and an inspiring Closing Keynote by Jennifer Buchanan on music's impact on mental health.

Participants should plan accommodations for three to four nights, depending on arrival and departure preferences (arriving Saturday or Sunday and departing on Tuesday evening or Wednesday).

Why Attend?

- **Advance Your Career:** Discover strategies to lead with confidence, elevate your role, and stay competitive in an evolving municipal landscape.
- **Gain Insights on Trends:** Learn how technology, leadership, and innovation are reshaping the EA profession.
- **Inspire & Be Inspired:** Engage with top speakers and thought leaders who will challenge and motivate you.
- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Participate in peer-driven sessions designed to tackle shared challenges and spark new solutions.
- **Leadership & Career Pathways:** Unlock your leadership potential and explore new career opportunities within or beyond your municipality.
- **Enhance Your Well-being:** Access tools for personal resilience, self-care, and work-life balance.
- **Strengthen Your Network:** Build lasting connections with EAs from across Canada and become part of a strong, supportive community.

And while you are in Ottawa—immerse yourself in the charm of Canada's vibrant Capital City. From the historic ByWard Market and Parliament Hill to world-class museums, scenic canals, and bustling cafés, Ottawa is the perfect backdrop for both professional growth and memorable adventures. Whether it's your first visit or a return trip, there's always something new to explore.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Room Block Information

A room block has been secured at the Delta Hotel by Marriott Ottawa City Centre, conveniently located at 101 Lyon Street North, the venue for the Conference. We encourage you to book early to take advantage of the special rate.

To reserve your room visit the [CAMA website](#) and either:

- Use the dedicated reservation link, or
- Call Central Reservations at 1-888-236-2427 and ask for the **CAMA Room Block** to receive the preferred rate.

Room Block Details:

- **Dates:** The block is available for arrivals starting Saturday, October 4, 2025, and departures through Wednesday, October 8, 2025.
- **Extended Stays:** The hotel will honor the group rate for up to three days before October 4 and three days after October 8, subject to availability.
- **Cut-Off Date:** Reservations must be made by 5:00 p.m. EST on Wednesday, September 3, 2025 (or until the block is sold out).

Hotel Information: Delta Hotels by Marriott Ottawa City Centre

- **Deposit Policy:** A deposit equal to one night's room rate plus taxes will be charged to your credit card at the time of booking. This deposit confirms the reservation and will be applied to the first night's stay upon check-in.
- **Cancellation Policy:** Reservations can be cancelled up to 72 hours prior to arrival without penalty. Cancellations made within 72 hours of arrival will result in a charge equal to one night's room rate plus taxes.
- **Room Rates:** All rates are subject to 13% HST and 5% Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT)
- **Additional Guest Fee:** A \$20.00 fee applies for each person beyond two guests per room.

Type of Room	Room Rate + 13% HST + 5% MAT
Traditional Room (Queen / 2 Doubles)	\$254.00
Deluxe Room (1 King)	\$274.00
Club Level Room (1 King)	\$344.00

CONFERENCE AIRFARE DISCOUNTS



Exclusive Airfare Discounts with Air Canada and WestJet for Conference Attendees

We are happy to confirm that for the 2025 CAMA Conference for Executive Assistants in Local Government, Air Canada offers discounts for **North America travel: 5% applies on standard fares, and 10% on flex fares & higher.** You will need the discount code listed below to take advantage of this offer. Please visit the [Air Canada website](#) to make a booking online.

Applicable Rules

- The booking is to be made to the following City: Ottawa, YOW (CA)
- The travel period begins Saturday, September 27, 2025 and ends Wednesday, October 15, 2025.
- Travel is valid Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.
- Discount Code: **TUA2B3J1**



For the 2025 CAMA Executive Assistants Conference, WestJet is pleased to offer **5% off Econo and 10% off EconoFlex and Premium fares for travel within Canada and 2% off Econo, 5% off EconoFlex and 10% off Premium base fares for guests travelling Trans-border. No discount will apply to Basic or Business class bookings.** To take advantage of this offer, you will need the discount code listed below. Please visit the [Westjet website](#) to make a booking online.

Applicable Rules

- The booking is to be made to the following City: Ottawa, YOW (CA)
- The travel period begins: Saturday, September 27, 2025 and ends Wednesday, October 15, 2025.
- **Coupon Code for Guest web / Travel Agent web: 4B6O8LQ. Please ensure the code is entered manually rather than copied and pasted. Promo Code for Travel Agent GDS only: YBC44**

TOURISM INFORMATION

Discover Ottawa: Canada's Capital Awaits You

Welcome to Ottawa, Canada's vibrant and dynamic capital! Nestled at the confluence of the Ottawa, Gatineau, and Rideau rivers, Ottawa blends the charm of a small town with the energy of a cosmopolitan city. Whether you are strolling along the Rideau Canal (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) or exploring the lively ByWard Market, Ottawa offers a wealth of experiences that celebrate Canada's history, culture, and innovation.

As the political and cultural heart of the country, Ottawa is home to world-class national museums, historic landmarks like Parliament Hill, and stunning green spaces, including Gatineau Park just across the river. From the Canadian Museum of History to the National Gallery of Canada, you will find inspiration at every turn.

Visitors can also enjoy a thriving culinary scene with diverse restaurants, local cafés, and craft breweries. Ottawa's blend of English and French heritage is reflected in its welcoming atmosphere, unique festivals, and year-round activities.

Make the most of your stay during the EA Conference and take time to explore all that Ottawa has to offer!

For more information and to plan your visit, go to:
www.ottawatourism.ca



Flash Your Badge Program

While you are in Ottawa, don't miss out on the Flash Your Badge Program, which provides exclusive discounts and special offers at a variety of participating attractions, tours, and restaurants. This program is available to all delegates, attendees, and one guest—no registration required! Simply show your event badge at any participating location to enjoy the advertised discount. Please note that some offers may require advance reservations. To make the most of your time in Ottawa, click [here](#) to view the full list of participating partners, and don't forget—the QR code for easy access will be printed on the back of your delegate badge.



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Delegate Program

Secure the Early Bird Rate for the Conference by registering before August 1, 2025. If you are employed by a municipal government and your municipality has a CAO or another employee that is a CAMA member, kindly include the member's name on the registration form (no member IDs or additional information is necessary).

The registration fee includes the Welcome Reception, all Conference sessions, breakfasts, refreshment breaks, lunches and the Casual Night Out.

Delegate Type	Early Bird Registration by August 1, 2025 (+13% HST)	Registration Fee After August 1, 2025 (+13% HST)
Member Municipality (Municipal Government) Choose this category if you work for municipal government and your municipality has a CAO or another employee that is a CAMA member.	\$750.00 + \$97.50 HST = \$847.50	\$850.00 + \$110.50 HST = \$960.50
Non-Member Municipality (Municipal Government) Choose this category if you work for municipal government and your municipality does not have an employee that is a CAMA member.	\$1150.00 + \$149.50 HST = \$1299.50	\$1250.00 + \$162.50 HST = \$1412.50
Retired Executive Assistant / Student Choose this category if you are a retired Executive Assistant who is no longer actively employed, or you are a student enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution.	\$450.00 + \$58.50 HST = \$508.50	\$550.00 + \$71.50 HST = \$621.50
Non-Member (Non-Municipal) Choose this category if you do not work for local government. This could include the provincial government, federal government, or a private business.	\$1250.00 + \$162.50 HST = \$1412.50	\$1350.00 + \$175.50 HST = \$1525.50

Click [here](#) to register

Companion Program

Companions have the option of joining delegates for the Sunday evening Welcome Reception and the Monday evening "Casual Night Out: A Taste of Canada"

Activity	Cost
Welcome Reception	\$50.00 + \$6.50 HST = \$56.50
Casual Night Out	\$100.00 + \$13.00 HST = \$113.00

Important Registration Information

- If you are paying by cheque, you are not considered registered until payment is received.
- If you are attending the full Conference, the tickets to all meals and social functions are included in the delegate registration price.
- An administration fee of \$200.00 for each cancelled registration applies until August 15th, 2025. **No refunds will be issued after August 15th, 2025.** Substitutions are permitted. Please request substitutions in writing to: admin@camacam.ca
- The deadline for registration is September 15th, 2025.
- CAMA will take photographs and some video at the 2025 CAMA Conference for Executive Assistants in Local Government and may use them in CAMA news or promotional materials whether in print, electronic or other media, including the CAMA website. By participating in this event, you grant CAMA the right to use your name and photograph for such purposes.



Empowered and Connected: How the CAMA EA Conference Strengthened My Skills and My Network

Attending the CAMA Executive Assistant Conference was an excellent opportunity to not only learn and develop new skills but also build a network of like-minded professionals. The sense of community at the Conference was incredibly strong, and I truly appreciated the chance to connect with EAs from across the country who understand the unique aspects of our roles.

The speakers were engaging and provided valuable insights on how to enhance our skills and leadership capabilities. I particularly appreciated the emphasis on both professional growth and personal well-being, which made the event feel well-rounded and meaningful.

Overall, the Conference was an enriching experience, and I left feeling both empowered and deeply connected to a community of professionals who truly understand the work we do.

SARA JONES
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, TOWN OF CANMORE, AB



WELCOME MESSAGES

Greetings from the President of CAMA.
Welcome to the 2nd Annual CAMA
Conference for Executive Assistants in Local
Government!

Executive Assistants are the quiet force behind every successful municipal leader. You are problem-solvers, trusted advisors, and the steady hand that keeps our organizations running smoothly. Your influence extends well beyond your job titles—you help shape the very culture and efficiency of local government.



Brenda Orchard

That's why this Conference matters. "Empowering Executive Assistants for Tomorrow" is more than just a theme—it's a call to action. As the demands on local governments evolve, so does the role of the Executive Assistant. Whether you are navigating complex political environments, implementing new technologies, or serving as the vital link between Council, senior leadership, and the community, you are making a significant impact every day.

On behalf of the CAMA Board, thank you for bringing your expertise, your professionalism, and your leadership to the table. We are proud to stand alongside you as you continue to grow and shape the future of local government.

I hope this Conference leaves you inspired, connected, and reminded of just how indispensable you are to the success of our municipalities.

Enjoy every moment.

A handwritten signature of Brenda Orchard in blue ink, written in a cursive style.

Brenda Orchard
CAMA President

WELCOME FROM THE CAMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is with immense pride and excitement that I welcome you to the 2nd Annual CAMA National Conference for Executive Assistants in Local Government.

The success of last year's inaugural event confirmed something I have long believed—**Executive Assistants are essential leaders in local government**. You are the ones who balance competing priorities, anticipate needs before they arise, and bring calm to chaos. You are the connectors, the problem-solvers, and the trusted allies that keep municipalities moving forward.

As someone who spent nearly three decades as an Executive Assistant and Office Administrator supporting a Mayor and CAO, I know firsthand how complex and rewarding this role can be. That's why this Conference holds a special place in my heart. It's more than just professional development—it's about recognizing your influence, amplifying your voice, and providing you with the tools to thrive in a demanding and ever-changing environment.

This year, we are building on that momentum with a program designed to challenge, inspire, and empower you for the future. Whether you are here to sharpen your skills, explore leadership pathways, or build lasting connections with peers from across the country, you belong here. This is your space.

I am deeply honored to continue advocating for the Executive Assistant profession and to welcome you to this national gathering. Let's celebrate your impact, strengthen our network, and chart a path forward—together.

I can't wait to see you in Ottawa!

Jennifer Goodine
CAMA Executive Director



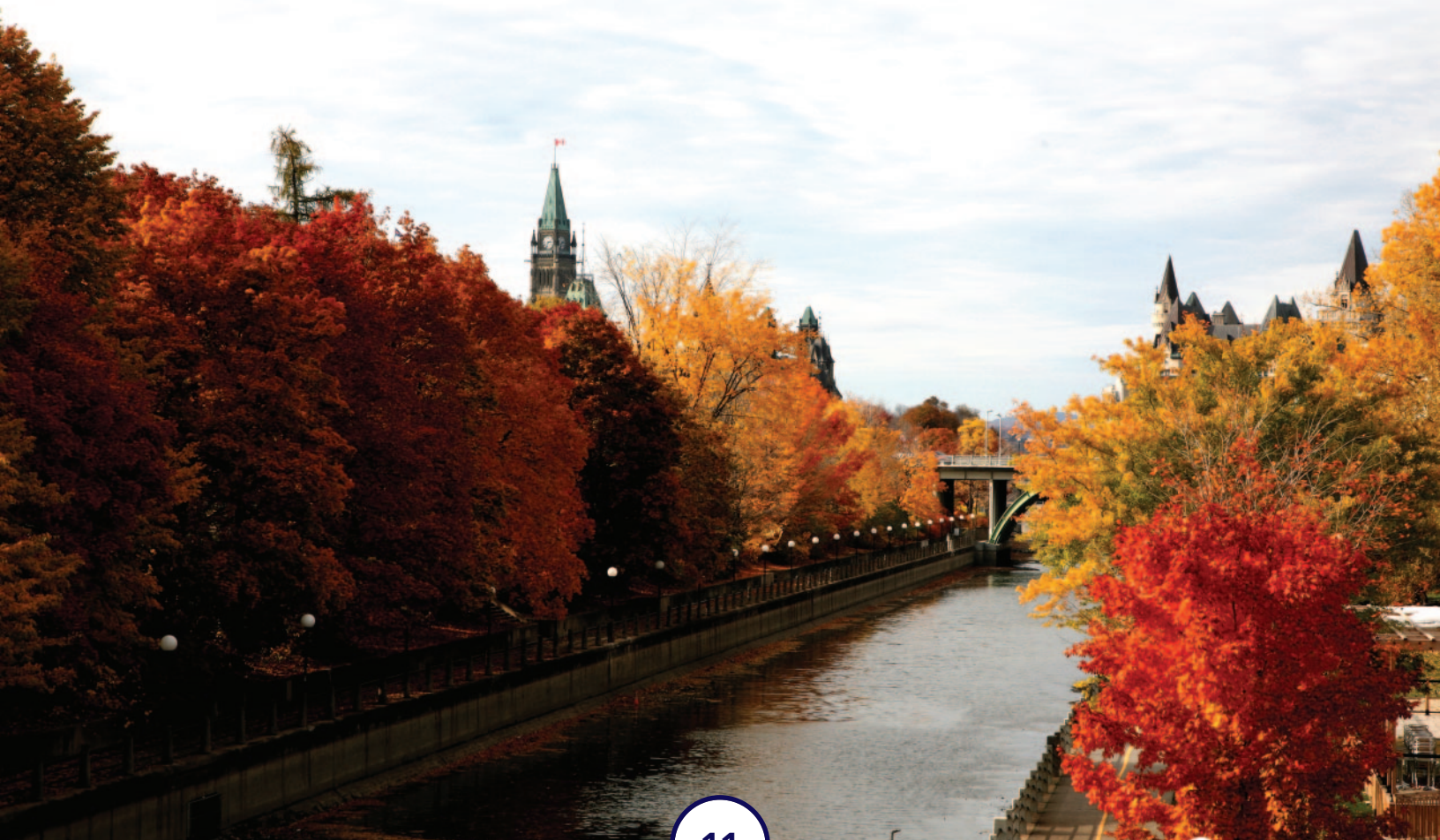
Jennifer Goodine

DAY ONE

Sunday, October 5, 2025

9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	Conference Registration
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon	Pre-Conference Activity: Historic Walking Tour - Explore Canada's Capital One Step at a Time!
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Pre-Conference Activity: Historic Walking Tour - Explore Canada's Capital One Step at a Time!
4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Conference Registration
5:15 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies
5:45 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	Opening Keynote: "The FLIP Side of Failure: Ignite Resilience, Relationships & Retention through Failing Forward!" (Sarah McVanel)
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Welcome Reception (Delta Hotel)

9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Conference Registration





**10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon /
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**Historic Walking Tour: Explore
Canada's Capital One Step at a
Time!**

Cost: \$25.00 + HST

There's no better way to experience the heart of Canada's bilingual Capital than on foot. Join your professional and knowledgeable guide for a private walking tour through downtown Ottawa, where every corner holds a story and every stop brings history to life.

From the iconic Parliament Hill to the solemn Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, from the charming Sparks Street promenade to the tranquil Major's Hill Park, and from the majestic Château Laurier to the scenic UNESCO World Heritage Rideau Canal, you will uncover the Capital's most cherished landmarks—and a few hidden gems along the way.

This leisurely and informative tour is your chance to delve into Ottawa's rich tapestry of history, politics, architecture, and culture. Whether you are a first-time visitor or a returning guest, you will gain fresh insights into the City's past, present, and future in an engaging and entertaining way.

The Details:

- The tour ends in the vibrant ByWard Market, where you are free to explore or head back to your hotel at your own pace (public transit available).
- Rain or shine—please dress for the weather!
- Total walking distance: Approximately 2.2 km (comfortable pace).

Lace up your walking shoes and get ready to discover the soul of the City—one fascinating step at a time!

4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Conference Registration

5:15 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. Opening Ceremonies

Get ready to kick off the CAMA National EA Conference in the heart of Canada's Capital! Our Opening Ceremonies will set the tone for an unforgettable few days of inspiration, learning, and connection. We are thrilled to welcome CAMA President Brenda Orchard, CAO for Lennox and Addington County, who will officially launch the event and help us celebrate the vital role Executive Assistants play in local government. This is your moment to come together, be energized, and start the Conference on a high note!

5:45 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. Opening Keynote: "The FLIP Side of Failure: Ignite Resilience, Relationships & Retention through Failing Forward!"

Speaker: Sarah McVanel

Failure is a tough nut. Either we treat it like the other "f-word," or we are espousing its virtues for learning. Let's face it. We don't have much resilience when failure comes crashing into our lives and careers. Most often, we play it safe. We avoid it or feel shame or blame when failure inevitably happens. We've had plenty of experiences that tell us to avoid failing at all costs.

Before you think this is your "unmotivational" speech, trust me when I say that this is empowerment personified. We will be challenging the very definitions of success and failure that we have blindly accepted, and it's sabotaging our well-being, performance, and satisfaction.

What does failure mean to you? Does it define you? Can you give yourself permission to fail?

In this session, you will truly experience and absorb the **F.L.I.P.** framework: **Fail, Learn, Ignite, Praise.** Each dimension of FLIP allows you to harness the power that comes from failure and let go of ego or judgment.

Learning from your failures creates your path to greatness. These lessons will forever change you and help you become more decisive, confident, and action oriented.

The question is ... where's your FLIP? How can you become more failure resilient? If you're ready to explore how unconditional recognition of yourself and others can ignite passion and performance, this session is for you. In this energizing and entertaining session (with a few fun twists), you will awaken possibilities, deepen connections, source solutions, and improve individual and organizational performance by recognizing greatness in a whole new light. Rather than kryptonite, let failure be your superpower.

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop greater failure resiliency by deconstructing unhealthy failure resistance.
- Identify how to best share, explore, and leverage the inevitable failures to fuel performance and innovation.
- Experience the flip side of failing firsthand and reflect on its relevance personally and professionally.
- Create a failure resiliency intention at a self, team, and organizational level.

About the Speaker

Sarah is a recognition expert, professional speaker, coach, author, recovering perfectionist, and movement maker. She created F.R.O.G. Forever Recognize Others' Greatness™ to invigorate companies so they can see their people as exceptional and, together, create a scrumptious, thriving culture where everyone belongs.

Sarah has 25+ years of experience training, coaching, and leading teams. From her senior leadership role, she founded her boutique firm *Greatness Magnified*. Proclaimed as the "Frog Lady," she can be found freaking out perfect strangers (in a good way) by handing out squishy frogs and asking them, "Have you been frogged lately?" and then acknowledging their greatness.

She's a Certified Senior Organizational Development Professional (CSODP), Professional Certified Coach (PCC), and Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL). She is one of 700 Certified Speaking Professionals (CSP) worldwide. She has a BA in Psychology, MSc in Family Relations, and Diplomas in Human Resources and Healthcare Administration.

You can catch her kayaking in the summer and snowshoeing in the winter with her husband or cooking a feast (while listening to an audiobook on double speed). She's a die-hard carb-ivour, amateur hip hopper, and TikTok embarrasser to her two kids.



Sarah McVanel

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Welcome Reception: Mix, Mingle & Capture the Moment!

Following the Opening Ceremony and Keynote, the excitement continues with our Welcome Reception—an evening designed for connection, celebration, and unforgettable moments.

Step into a lively atmosphere filled with exquisite cuisine, interactive experiences, and the smooth sounds of live jazz. Whether you're catching up with old colleagues or meeting new friends from across the country, this is your chance to network in style with Executive Assistants who share your passion for excellence in local government.

And here's a bonus you won't want to miss—complimentary professional headshots! Whether you are refreshing your LinkedIn profile or simply want a polished portrait that captures your professional glow, our onsite photographer has you covered. Flash your best smile and let your confidence shine!

It's more than just a reception—it's your opportunity to mix, mingle, and make memories that will last long after the conference ends.

DAY TWO

Monday, October 6, 2025	
7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Conference Registration
7:45 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	Plenary Session: "Is AI Stealing Your Job? The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Your Future" (Rhonda Scharf)
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Plenary Session: "From EA to Executive: Navigating the Path to Leadership" (Brenda Orchard, Lisa Niblock, Shannon Harrower)
10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Refreshment Break
11:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon	Plenary Session: "Dynamic Duos: Elevating EA-CAO Partnerships for Modern Leadership" (Terri Brennan, Peter Neufeld, Andrea Palichuk, Sonya Pritchard, Corinne Nielsen)
12:00 Noon to 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.	Workshop: "Your FLIP Moment is Now - How Unsung Heroes Can Recognize Their Own Greatness" (Sarah McVanel)
2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Refreshment Break
3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Workshop: "How to Have Those Difficult Conversations" (Rhonda Scharf)
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	Free Time to Explore the Downtown
7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.	Casual Night Out - Red and White Night - A Toast to Canada (Lowertown Brewery & Sky Lounge in the Byward Market)

7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Conference Registration

7:45 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
Breakfast

8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Plenary Session: Is AI Stealing Your Job? The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Your Future

Speaker: Rhonda Scharf

Artificial intelligence is taking over our lives and is one of the hottest topics in the business world today. We know it can save us time and effort, but at what cost does that come? Is your relevancy or job on the line?

Everything we do is changing now faster than it has ever changed before (and that is saying a lot!). What you did yesterday won't be what you do tomorrow. Change is happening faster than ever, and we can expect that our working lives will transition in ways we could have never imagined. Is AI stealing YOUR job?

Be sure to find out why Rhonda thinks your future looks bright!

- Understand what skills will be critical in the future.
- Gain insight on how to maximize your value and provide skills AI can't, to make yourself invaluable.
- Get an update in emerging technology (such as ChatGPT and other programs that can make your life easier).
- Have a frank conversation on the ethics and privacy of AI and how that affects your company and industry.

Rhonda is the author of eight books, but her latest, "Alexa is Stealing Your Job: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Your Future" is the foundation for this lively, entertaining, and enlightening keynote.

About the Speaker

Rhonda Scharf is a renowned, award-winning speaker, author, consultant, and trainer, and the "go-to" expert for the Administrative Professional and Executive Assistant community. With over 250,000 trained globally, Rhonda is known for delivering fun, uplifting, and insightful education for admins, because #ADMINSROCK!



Rhonda Scharf

Her speaking career began at age two (when her mother paid her 25 cents to be quiet for five minutes!). Humorous, engaging, and thought-provoking, Rhonda has a unique gift for turning the ordinary into something extraordinary.

Rhonda has earned the prestigious Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation, was inducted into the Speaking Hall of Fame (2017), and achieved her Global Speaking Fellow (GSF) designation in 2019. She is the only person in the world to hold all four of these honours, including the Spirit of CAPS Award (2008).

A long-time member of "Who's Who in Professional Speakers" since 1998, Rhonda also represents Canada at the World Administrators Alliance.

Rhonda and her husband Warren split their time between Ottawa, Canada and Fort Myers, Florida, enjoying golf, running, and a glass of wine by the pool. A top-tier traveller, Rhonda is always ready to hop on a flight to inspire and empower professionals worldwide.

Her mission is to bring her unique, fun, and relevant perspective on administration, communication, and workplace effectiveness to executive and administrative professionals everywhere.

9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Plenary Session: "From EA to Executive: Navigating the Path to Leadership"

Moderator: Brenda Orchard, CAMA President/Board Representative for Ontario, Chief Administrative Officer, Lennox & Addington County, ON

Speakers:

- **Lisa Niblock, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Paradise, NL / CAMA Board Representative for Newfoundland & Labrador**
- **Shannon Harrower, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Vermilion, AB**

Many Executive Assistants possess the skills, vision, and determination to step into senior leadership roles—but how does one successfully make the transition from supporting executives to becoming one? This session features inspiring stories of CAOs who began their careers as Executive Assistants and worked their way to the top. Learn how they leveraged their behind-the-scenes insight, built trust and influence, and developed the leadership competencies needed to take the next step.

Through candid discussions, panelists will share:

- The critical turning points and decisions that shaped their career paths.
- How their EA experience became an asset in executive roles.
- Strategies to overcome self-doubt, biases, and common barriers.
- Tips for building credibility and earning opportunities in leadership circles.
- How they balanced career advancement with personal growth and resilience.

Whether you are an EA aspiring to move into management or simply looking to develop your leadership potential, this session will provide actionable advice and a healthy dose of inspiration.

About the Moderator

Brenda Orchard
CAMA President /
Board
Representative for
Ontario
Chief Administrative
Officer
Lennox & Addington
County, ON



Brenda Orchard

Brenda Orchard is the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Lennox and Addington County, ON. She has 25 years of experience in senior municipal administration and 16 years as a CAO. She has worked with Municipal Councils in three different provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario) and in both urban and rural settings. She has served as a CAO in Nova Scotia (Annapolis County) as well as Southwestern and Eastern Ontario (Huron County and currently Lennox and Addington County), and in both single-tier and upper-tier structures.

She has a municipal background in Economic Development, having been a member of the Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) for the past 25 years. Her passion now lies in employee engagement and staff development. She is dedicated to the growth and development of staff; believing that the success of our communities is predicated on high functioning staff teams that can work with Councils to realize a community's full potential. Brenda has served on many Committees in her seven years on the Board, but the CAMA Toolkit Committee has been her particular passion. She has worked on a number of resource documents to assist CAOs in navigating professional relationships with Councils and staff.

She has been a member of the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators for 16 years. She is also a past member of the Board of Directors for the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).



About the Speakers

Lisa Niblock **Chief Administrative Officer**

Town of Paradise, NL
CAMA Board
Representative for
Newfoundland &
Labrador

Lisa Niblock is the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Paradise, Newfoundland's third largest and fastest-growing municipality. She began her municipal career as Manager of Finance with the Town of Torbay in 2008, became Executive Administrator with the Town of Paradise in 2015, and was appointed CAO in 2017. She holds a Bachelor of Management, a Business Marketing Diploma (co-op), and Lean Six Sigma Executive Green and Yellow Belt certifications.

Lisa's first municipal experience was during a work term with the City of Hamilton, where her passion for local government began. She worked in the private sector before returning to Newfoundland in 2006.

As CAO, Lisa has led major strategic initiatives and emergency responses. She serves on committees with Municipalities Newfoundland and mentors through Professional Municipal Administrators.

Lisa lives in Conception Bay South with her husband, two university-aged children, and three pets, enjoying yoga, hiking, and quality time at her summer home.



Lisa Niblock

Shannon Harrower **Chief Administrative Officer**

Town of Vermilion, AB

Shannon Harrower is the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Vermilion, a freelance makeup artist and a mother of two.

Shannon's accolades include a Bachelors of Arts (Hons. 2013) in Sociology and Geography from Queen's University, National Advanced Certificates in Local Government Administration (Level I&II), an Applied Land Use Planning Certificate from the University of Alberta, as well as a Certified Local Government Manager designation from the Society of Local Government Managers (SLGM).

Shannon has spent the last ten years working in a variety of capacities for several municipalities in rural Alberta. Her passion for developing and implementing new programs and initiatives has enabled Shannon to motivate her colleagues and staff through effective communication, reliability, and solution-oriented approaches. At only thirty-four years old, Shannon is proof that hard work, determination, and a passion for building strong communities is all you need to develop your leadership potential.



Shannon Harrower

10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Refreshment Break

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon Plenary Session: “Dynamic Duos: Elevating EA-CAO Partnerships for Modern Leadership”

Moderator: Terri Brennan, Executive Coordinator,
Office of the Mayor & CAO, Municipality of North
Cowichan, BC

Speakers:

- **Municipality of Leamington, ON:**
Peter Neufeld, CAO
Andrea Palichuk, Executive Assistant to CAO &
Mayor
- **Dufferin County, ON:**
Sonya Pritchard, CAO
Corinne Nielsen, Executive Assistant - Office of
the CAO

Behind every great municipal leader is a rockstar EA—but what transforms this partnership from good to truly powerful? This year’s panel flips the script by diving into the real stories behind successful EA-CAO collaborations. Expect honest conversations about the wins, the challenges, and the occasional missteps that ultimately strengthen these vital partnerships.

What You’ll Explore:

- **The Trust Factor:** How do EAs and CAOs cultivate mutual respect and confidence?
- **Decision-Making Dynamics:** When to lead and when to support—understanding roles in high-pressure situations.
- **The Communication Code:** Strategies for fostering transparency and staying aligned, even when the workload skyrockets.
- **Innovation in Action:** Explore tools, strategies, and tech hacks that modern teams use to stay ahead.

Live Problem-Solving Challenge

Adding a fun and interactive twist, the panel will tackle real-time challenges submitted by attendees. Whether it’s managing conflicting priorities, handling tough Council relations, or navigating shifting political landscapes, watch as seasoned EAs and CAOs brainstorm practical solutions on the spot.

Why Attend?

This session isn’t just theory—it’s packed with actionable advice from professionals who’ve been in the trenches. Whether your goal is to strengthen your working relationship, discover practical time-saving tips, or simply get inspired, you’ll leave equipped to unlock new potential in your EA-Manager partnership.

About the Moderator:

Terri Brennan
Executive Coordinator
Office of the Mayor &
CAO
Municipality of North
Cowichan, BC

Terri is an Executive Coordinator with thirty years of experience in local and provincial government, including the last six and a half years supporting the CAO and Mayor at the Municipality of North Cowichan.

Known for a relentless commitment to excellence and an insatiable curiosity for learning, Terri empowers individuals and teams to achieve their highest potential. Terri's unique ability to adapt her approach based on the needs and preferences of those she supports, combined with strengths in working under pressure, prioritizing workloads, and maintaining discretion and confidentiality, makes her a standout leader assistant. Terri has a genuine passion for helping others succeed in their endeavors.



Terri Brennan

About the Speakers:

Peter Neufeld
Chief Administrative
Officer
Municipality of
Leamington, ON

Born and raised in Leamington, Peter is a graduate of the University of Windsor where he received both a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science focusing on public administration and a Bachelor of Laws degree.

Peter has extensive senior management experience including Director of Labour Relations at Windsor Regional Hospital, Chief Operating Officer at Windsor Utilities Commission. Following several years in the private practice of Law in Leamington, Peter joined the Municipality of Leamington as Chief Administrative Officer in July 2014.



Peter Neufeld

Peter served on the Ontario Municipal Administrators Association (OMAA) Board of Directors beginning in 2019 holding the positions of Second Vice-President and First Vice-President where he also served as the Chair of the Conference Planning Committee. Peter was appointed President from May 2023 - May 2024 and completed his time as Past President in April 2025.

As CAO, Peter lauds the efforts of the roughly 225 employees of the Municipality, and promotes the history, culture, uniqueness, and potential of Leamington whenever possible to ensure a sense of community among the residents while Leamington experiences a transformation through unprecedented growth and development.

Andrea Palichuk
Executive Assistant to
the CAO & Mayor
Municipality of
Leamington, ON

A lifelong resident of Essex County Ontario, Andrea holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education from the University of Windsor. Since graduating, Andrea's career has seen her gain experience across various sectors.

Beginning in private education, she moved to front-line administrative support in the healthcare sector followed by management of the Board of Directors for a Michigan-based health insurance company and its subsidiaries. Andrea joined the Municipality of Leamington in 2017 as the Executive Assistant to the CAO and Mayor where, in addition to administrative support of both offices, she oversees projects aligned with the Municipality's Strategic Vision.

In 2022, Andrea completed AMCTO's Municipal Administration Program and successfully earned her Accredited Municipal Professional designation in 2023; in 2024, she completed CAMA's Executive Assistant Masterclass Series One and is currently working toward completing Series Two. Committed to continued learning and professional excellence, Andrea regularly participates in training around municipal policy, equity, cultural competency and reconciliation in action. As a member of the Municipality's Employee Engagement and Wellness and Joint Health and Safety Committees, Andrea works collaboratively to support a workplace that ensures the holistic wellbeing of its employees.



Andrea Palichuk

Sonya Pritchard
Chief Administrative
Officer
Dufferin County, ON

Sonya Pritchard is currently the Chief Administrative Officer for the County of Dufferin. She has held municipal leadership roles for 25 years in administration, recreation and finance. Prior to this Sonya was a Finance Officer in the Canadian Air Force stationed at bases in North Bay, Ontario and Goose Bay, Labrador. She graduated from the Royal Military College system with an honors Bachelors degree and later obtained her Certified Professional Accounting designation. She is also a Certified Change Management professional. Throughout her career Sonya has continued her learning journey with various leadership programs and certificates. She believes it's important to give back to the profession and currently serves as a Financial Literacy Volunteer with CPA Canada, is a member of the Ontario Municipal Administrators Conference Committee and the CAMA Professional Development Committee.



Sonya Pritchard

Corinne Nielsen
Executive Assistant,
Office of the CAO
Dufferin County, ON

Corinne Nielsen is currently the Executive Assistant to the CAO for the County of Dufferin. She has nine years of municipal experience in administrative roles supporting the delivery of both Ontario Works and Housing Services, in addition to Office Administration. Prior to this, Corinne has worked in the field of social services supporting a spectrum of individuals, ranging from children with dual diagnoses to seniors. She graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with an honors Bachelors degree in English and Religion & Culture. Corinne is also a Certified Change Management professional.



Corinne Nielsen

12:00 Noon to 1:00 p.m.
Lunch

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Workshop: "Your FLIP Moment is
Now - How Unsung Heroes Can
Recognize Their Own Greatness"

Facilitator/Speaker:
Sarah McVanel - See
bio on [Page 14](#)



Sarah McVanel

Executive Assistants are the heartbeat of an organization. You anticipate needs before they arise, create order in chaos, and make the impossible happen—often without fanfare.

But let's turn the tables for a moment. What if YOU were the one being recognized?

In this immersive, heart-opening session, we'll uncover:

- The failures that shaped you (but don't define you).
- The lessons you've mastered (that make you invaluable).
- The fire inside you (that has always been there, waiting for permission).
- The recognition you are finally ready to give yourself—and others.

You will leave feeling unstoppable. Not because I told you—you will feel it for yourself.

And because if anyone is a make-it-happen, doer, planner-extraordinaire, it's YOU—this session won't just inspire you. You will leave with your own FLIP Action Plan—a simple, powerful guide for recognizing your impact, reinforcing your resilience, and bringing more of this energy into your daily life (and maybe even your entire workplace).

2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Refreshment Break

3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Workshop: "How to Have Those Difficult Conversations"

Facilitator/Speaker:

Rhonda Scharf – See
bio on [Page 16](#)

Having difficult conversations isn't fun for anyone. Telling someone they don't smell nice, saying no to a client, or having to tell the boss their request is unreasonable is something that no one looks forward to doing. We feel anxious and uncomfortable.

Yet, our roles demand that we know how, and are willing to have those difficult conversations. We need to be effective and build trust and respect, without damaging relationships along the way.

This session with Rhonda will show you how. You will be given an easy, and fun, framework to keep you professional and focused so you know exactly *How to Have Those Difficult Conversations*.



Rhonda Scharf

Here's What You'll Learn:

- 10 tips for handling difficult conversations so you are prepared and confident you are focused and clear.
- Handling your emotions (and the emotions of the other person).
- Danger zones to keep your eyes on (don't fall into these common traps).
- A step-by-step model to follow to make it easy every time!

Learn to deliver those difficult conversations in a professional, respectful, and successful manner.

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Free Time to Explore the Downtown

Take this opportunity to unwind and discover the charm of Canada's Capital at your own pace! Whether you're strolling along the historic Rideau Canal, browsing the boutiques of Sparks Street, or enjoying a cozy café in the ByWard Market, downtown Ottawa offers something for everyone. From cultural landmarks to scenic spots and local gems, your evening is yours to enjoy.



7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Casual Night Out - Red & White - A Taste of Canada Lowertown Brewery & Sky Lounge in the Byward Market

Sponsored by [Government Frameworks](#)

Government Frameworks is a leading provider of specialized planning, process mapping, process and forms automation, records management, and corporate reporting services, catering to local governments across Australia, Canada, the USA, and New Zealand.

Our flagship offering, the Local Government Framework®, is a cloud-based governance tool that simplifies complex administration and reporting needs, enabling local governments to operate efficiently and ensure compliance.

Get ready for an exciting night that's pure Canadian magic! We are cranking up the fun in the heart of Ottawa at Lowertown Brewery and Sky Lounge - a perfect combo of cozy vibes and rooftop energy. Prepare to feast like a true Canuck with a spread of mouthwatering Canadian cuisine - think gooey poutine, maple-infused delights, and comfort food that will make your taste buds dance! But wait, the party doesn't stop there....grab the mic, hit the stage, and unleash your inner Canadian rock star to our live bank karaoke.

Dress Code: Embrace your Canadian pride! Wear red and white, sport maple leaf swag, throw on a hockey jersey, or rock that classic Canada flannel! The bolder, the better!

And just when you think it couldn't get any better... there will be a few surprises waiting for you throughout the night! So come curious, come hungry, and get ready to sing your heart out as we celebrate the incredible EA community—Canadian style!

DAY THREE

Tuesday, October 7, 2025	
7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Conference Registration
7:45 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	Plenary Session/Workshop: "Behind the Scenes - EAs Driving Exceptional Internal & External Customer Service" (Andrea Chambers)
9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.	Plenary Session: "Bridging Protocols & Partnerships: Supporting Indigenous Engagement in Municipal Government" (Marc Forgette)
10:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.	Refreshment Break
10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	Panel Session: "Efficiency in Action: Streamlining Operations for Maximum Impact" (Pamela Nicholson, Shelley Westlake-Brown, Jennifer Sparks-Zahn, Tina Lee)
11:45 Noon to 12:45 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.	Workshop: "Hot Topics Workshop - Peer-to-Peer Exchange for EAs" (Rhonda Scharf)
2:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.	Refreshment Break
2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.	Closing Keynote: "The MUSIC ADVANTAGE: How the Power of Music Can Elevate Work, Well-Being, and Connection" (Jennifer Buchanan)
3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Closing Ceremonies

7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Conference Registration

7:45 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
Breakfast

8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Workshop: Behind the Scenes - EAs Driving Exceptional Internal & External Customer Service

Facilitator/Speaker: Andrea Chambers, Executive Assistant to the Mayor & CAO, Town of Lincoln, ON

Customer Service isn't one-size-fits-all—every municipality is on their own journey. As Executive Assistants (EAs), you play a crucial role in shaping both internal collaboration and external service delivery. Whether you are refining processes or building a service culture from scratch, this session will provide practical insights tailored to your role.

EAs are the bridge between senior leadership, staff, Council, and the community. This interactive session will explore how to strengthen internal collaboration, deliver seamless external service, and balance priorities under pressure.

Andrea Chambers, Executive Assistant to the Mayor and CAO of the Town of Lincoln, will share best practices from their Customer Service Strategy and Customer Service Manual, including service standards, response templates, and the Customer Service Ambassador Program. She will provide actionable strategies for Executive Assistants on how to foster clear communication between leadership and staff, manage inquiries from residents, businesses, and Council with professionalism and consistency, and ensure smooth workflows, even in high-pressure situations.

Key Takeaways:

- Understand the EA's role in connecting internal teams with external service goals.
- Learn how mastering both leads to stronger municipal outcomes.
- Take away two to three best practices to implement immediately.

Solution Exchange - Sharing Best Practices & Tools

Following the presentation, participants will engage in small-group discussions to exchange real-world

solutions, such as effective communication templates and response frameworks, practical tech tools like request-tracking software, de-escalation strategies for handling difficult conversations, and techniques to enhance internal collaboration and reduce bottlenecks.

This interactive session will provide you with the tools to elevate customer service in local government—no matter where your municipality is on their journey.

About the Speaker

**Andrea Chambers
Executive Assistant to
the CAO & Mayor
Town of Lincoln, ON**

Andrea Chambers currently serves as the Executive Assistant to both the Mayor and CAO for the Town of Lincoln, one of the fastest growing municipalities in the Niagara Region. She has held this position for nearly a decade.



Andrea Chambers

Andrea is a highly skilled professional with a robust background in business and finance. She graduated from college in the UK with a Diploma in Business and Finance, complimented by a specialization in tourism. With extensive experience in tourism and customer service management, Andrea transitioned into municipal government in 2011 after emigrating to Canada in 2003. Since then, she has excelled in public service and community engagement.

Andrea is a valued member of the Town of Lincoln Customer Service Executive Committee and serves as an Ambassador for the Customer Service Strategy Committee, implemented in 2023. She has played a pivotal role in shaping service excellence within the organization and is a recipient of several Corporate Awards for Excellence. Andrea is also recognized for her advanced problem-solving skills and successful event planning, which have significantly contributed to the Town's initiatives. In recognition of her outstanding contributions on the Canada 150 Mural Mosaic Project, 50 Faces of Lincoln and the annual Mayor's Golf Tournament raising over \$110,000, she was awarded the Mayor's Medal.

A passionate traveler, Andrea has explored much of the world, with South America being the last continent yet to visit. Driven by a love for global cultures and languages, Andrea continues to thrive both professionally and personally, always seeking new adventures and opportunities for growth.

9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Plenary Session: Bridging Protocols & Partnerships: Supporting Indigenous Engagement in Municipal Government

Speaker: Marc Forgette

Executive Assistants play a vital role in fostering respectful and inclusive municipal practices, especially in supporting Indigenous engagement. As key coordinators and often the first point of contact, EAs organize meetings and events that may involve territorial acknowledgements, cultural participation, and protocol.

This session provides essential knowledge and cultural awareness to help EAs support Indigenous relations with professionalism and confidence. Learn how to navigate protocols, build respectful relationships, and avoid common missteps. Topics include:

- When and how to deliver land acknowledgements
- Inviting Elders and Indigenous leaders
- Honoraria, gift-giving, and ceremonial considerations
- Recognizing sacred items and cultural sensitivities
- Managing flags, symbols, and representation at events
- Building culturally safe, long-term relationships

Whether coordinating a meeting or civic ceremony, EAs will gain the tools to contribute meaningfully to reconciliation and inclusive governance.

About the Speaker

Marc Forgette
Owner
Makatew Workshops

Marc Forgette is a proud French Algonquin member of the Apitipi Anicinapek Nation (formerly the Wahgoshig First Nation) hailing from Northeastern Ontario in Canada.

In 2019, Marc embarked on a journey of cultural rediscovery and founded Makatew Workshops. The name “Makatew” honors his 4th-great-grandfather and means “black” in his ancestral language—before English settlers assigned the family an English surname.

Marc Forgette has turned his personal journey of reclaiming heritage into a vibrant cultural platform. Through Makatew Workshops, he's creating safe, respectful spaces where people—Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike—can connect, craft, learn, and engage deeply with Indigenous culture and reconciliation.



Marc Forgette

10:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Refreshment Break

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Panel Session: "Efficiency in Action: Streamlining Operations for Maximum Impact"

Facilitator: Pamela Nicholson, National Senior Strategy Advisor, Government Frameworks

Speakers:

- Tina Lee, Executive Assistant to the CAO, The Regional Municipality of Durham, ON
- Shelley Westlake-Brown, Executive Assistant to the Mayor, Council, CAO & Deputy CAO, Township of Springwater, ON
- Jennifer Sparks-Zahn, Executive Assistant to the Regional Chair, Niagara Region, ON

Sponsored by **Government Frameworks**

Government Frameworks is a leading provider of specialized planning, process mapping, process and forms automation, records management, and corporate reporting services, catering to local governments across Australia, Canada, the USA, and New Zealand.

Our flagship offering, the Local Government Framework©, is a cloud-based governance tool that simplifies complex administration and reporting needs, enabling local governments to operate efficiently and ensure compliance.

Executive Assistants are the backbone of municipal operations, ensuring everything runs smoothly behind the scenes. But how can you optimize workflows, reduce bottlenecks, and create efficiencies that truly make a difference? In this engaging panel discussion, experienced EAs will share their best practices, tools, and strategies for streamlining daily operations, from managing information flow to refining processes that save time and enhance productivity. Facilitated by Government Frameworks, this interactive session will provide real-world insights, practical takeaways, and the opportunity to exchange ideas with peers who understand the unique challenges of working in local government. Don't miss this chance to learn how to work smarter—not harder!

About the Facilitator:

Pamela Nicholson
National Senior Strategy Advisor
Government Frameworks



Pamela Nicholson

Pamela Nicholson is the National Senior Strategy Advisor at Government Frameworks, where she leads a team supporting municipalities from coast to coast. She works closely with CAOs to implement cloud-based governance solutions that streamline communication, strengthen risk management, and support the execution of strategic priorities.

With experience in municipal government, education, and the private sector, Pamela brings a well-rounded, hands-on approach to planning, execution, and project delivery. She also serves on a Board at Georgian College in Barrie, ON.

Based in Simcoe County, Ontario, she shares life with her husband and two energetic German Shorthaired Pointers. Outside of work, Pamela is a mentor, fine artist, gardener, and yoga enthusiast—committed to helping others create space for what matters most.

About the Speakers:

Tina Lee
Executive Assistant to the CAO
The Regional Municipality of Durham, ON



Tina Lee

Since 2012, Tina has served as the Executive Assistant to the Chief Administrative Officer at the Regional Municipality of Durham. Tina has 23 years experience in Regional government and a background in Business Management, Administration, Finance, and Social Services.

Tina holds a diploma in Business Administration and a certificate in Municipal Administration from the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO). In pursuit of excellence, Tina continues to enhance her skills and practices by participating in the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Executive Assistant Master Class sessions and the University of Toronto Rotman School of Management custom Senior Leadership Programs.

Tina is passionate about mentoring and supporting colleagues, particularly Administrative and Executive Assistants, encouraging them to achieve their goals and succeed in their careers.

Shelley Westlake-Brown
Executive Assistant to
the Mayor, Council,
CAO & Deputy CAO
Township of
Springwater, ON

Shelley Westlake-Brown serves as Executive Assistant to the Mayor, CAO, and Council at the Township of Springwater, leveraging an impressive 45 years of municipal government experience. Known for her adeptness in complex administrative settings, Shelley's career showcases her commitment to public service and her ability to lead through change while advising senior leadership.

Her career path reflects a dedication to public service and a unique ability to adapt and lead through change. She has supported multiple administrations, contributed to key corporate initiatives, and served as a steady, trusted advisor to senior leadership. Known for her sharp organizational skills, thoughtful communication, and commitment to excellence, Shelley has set the standard for the Executive Assistant role in municipal settings.



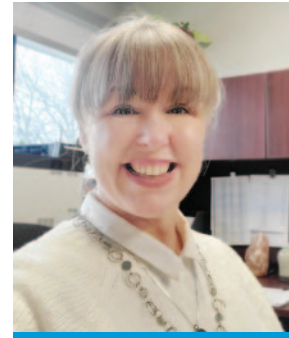
Shelly Westlake-Brown

Jennifer Sparks-Zahn
Executive Assistant to
Regional Chair
Niagara Region, ON

Jennifer Sparks-Zahn is an Executive Assistant with over 23 years of experience providing executive-level administrative support in the public sector. She currently supports Niagara Regional Chair Jim Bradley and consistently delivers strategic and operational support to senior leadership across the organization.

In her previous role as the Executive Assistant to the Chief Administrative Officer & Administration Lead, she participated in several internal committees and working groups. She served as the Team Lead for the Corporate and Local Area Municipal Executive/Administrative Assistants Group, Treasurer of the Corporate Employee United Way Committee and Co-Chair of the Regional Chair's Golf Tournament.

Recognized for her collaborative approach and commitment to excellence, Jennifer plays a key role in cross-functional initiatives that advance employee development and foster a positive corporate culture. She is also a trusted resource on accessibility legislation, offering training and guidance on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to both internal teams and external stakeholders. Her expertise in accessible documentation supports Niagara Region's dedication to inclusivity and compliance. Her leadership reflects a deep commitment to organizational effectiveness and community engagement.



Jennifer Sparks-Zahn



11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Lunch

12:45 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.
Workshop: "Hot Topics Workshop -
Peer-to-Peer Exchange for EAs"

Facilitator/Speaker:
Rhonda Scharf - See
Bio on [Page 16](#)

Join us for an engaging and fast-paced workshop designed to tap into the collective knowledge of Executive Assistants from across the country. In this interactive session, you will rotate between tables, each focused on a different "hot topic" relevant to the EA role. Share your own experiences, gather practical tips, and hear fresh perspectives from your peers. The session will wrap up with a collaborative debrief, highlighting key takeaways and actionable insights you can bring back to your organization.



Rhonda Scharf

2:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.
Refreshment Break

2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.
Closing Keynote: "The MUSIC
ADVANTAGE: How the Power of
Music Can Elevate Work, Well-
Being, and Connection"

Speaker: [Jennifer Buchanan](#)

Music is more than background noise—it is a tool for resilience, focus, and motivation. It reminds us of who we are and serves as a trusted companion, offering support and encouragement when we need it most. This keynote explores how music can reduce stress, enhance clarity, and create meaningful moments of validation and connection, helping us show up as our best selves in both work and life. This is a keynote full of key notes:

- Dive into the fascinating connection between music and the brain, exploring findings that reveal the powerful relationship between music, emotions, and actions.
- Discover how to use music to enhance mood, strengthen memory, and sustain energy throughout the day.
- Be inspired by compelling stories that showcase how intentional music use can transform moments of overwhelm into moments of empowerment.

Leave with practical strategies and fresh insights that will change the way you experience music—both personally and professionally.

About the Speaker

Jennifer Buchanan, MBA, MTA

Jennifer Buchanan, MBA, MTA, is a trailblazer in music therapy, blending clinical expertise with business acumen to create lasting change in healthcare, education, and workplace wellness. For over three decades, she has led JB Music Therapy, an award-winning company known for its innovative approach and commitment to empowering individuals through music. Under her visionary leadership, JB Music Therapy has become Canada's largest employer of Certified Music Therapists and a launchpad for new professionals serving in diverse medical, educational, and community settings.

Beyond her company, Jennifer has served as President and Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Music Therapists, advancing the field across the country. As a current Director at the National Music Centre, she continues to advocate for the integration of music therapy into health, recovery, and learning, positioning it as an essential component of overall well-being. Her work with the National Music Centre continues to raise awareness about the benefits of music therapy on a national scale.



Jennifer Buchanan

Jennifer is also an award-winning author. Her book, *Wellness, Wellplayed*, explores the profound connection between music, the brain, and its impact on work, relationships, and health. Her insights have resonated with diverse audiences, from corporations to law enforcement, earning her recognition in esteemed media outlets.

Jennifer's greatest personal achievement was learning to swim at the age of 36—a reflection of her commitment to growth and excellence in all areas of her life. This perseverance is mirrored in her professional journey, where she remains a sought-after speaker and consultant. Jennifer's dedication to her profession, her innovative approach, and her ability to connect with a wide array of audiences continue to champion her work across Canada and beyond.

3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Closing Ceremonies

Join us as we wrap up three impactful days of learning, inspiration, and connection at the EA Conference in Ottawa. We'll come together one last time to celebrate the friendships made, the knowledge gained, and the incredible contributions of Executive Assistants across the country. Let's close out the event on a high note and send you home feeling empowered, appreciated, and ready to continue making a difference.



CAMA CONFERENCE FOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Empowering Executive Assistants for Tomorrow

Questions?

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1-866-771-2262 or admin@camacam.ca

Register by August 1, 2025 to get the
Early Bird Pricing!

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Save the dates: October 4-6, 2026 (Westin Calgary)